CHRISTIAN AND CONJUGAL COUNSELL OR, Christian Counsell, applyed unto the MARIED ESTATE.

By *Will. Thomas*, Minister of the Gospel, and Rector of the Church of *Ubley*.

Heb. 13. 4. *Mariage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled.*

Bernard. super Cantica. Serm. 66. *Tolle de Ecclesia honorabile connubium & torum immaculatum, nonne replebis eam concubinariis incestuosis, seminifluis mollibus, masculorum concubitoribus, & omni denique genere immundorum?*

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To the CHRISTIAN READER.

THese Meditations (Good Reader) being first conceived and improved for the use of one author, were the distinct fate

and comming afterward into more hands, the printing of them hath been long since desired, which (the World being full of Books, and my self of Weakness) I diverted and have hitherto deferd.

[illegible] lest being [illegible] seen a [illegible] place should [illegible] and considering [illegible] what I have [illegible] in so [illegible] little,

little, as that it is not like to be tedious; and of such a subject as toucheth upon the substance of Godliness, and so may be sung very profitable; I have, at length, adventured to let it see the light. And that the rather, because I would have this imprinted in the hearts of Christians, that Religion is much seen in Relations; Hence the Apostles proceeding in

their Epistles from matters of doctrine to prescripts of practise; do therein descend, and dispense their directions into several Callings and Conditions, as of Magistrates and Subjects, Ministers and People, Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Many also which are contained and determined in the Marriage estate:

Even

Even Nature and Reason make Offices and Societie-services the trydl of Vertue: a is being an easie matter to creep into a Cell, and under a pretence of Devotion to serve and satisfie Selfwill; but to appear in the sight of the Sun, and to appear approved where there are many quick-sighted, and some severe observers, there will find work enough for the

a Magistratus virum indicat

He that will prove his yoke of Oxen proves them best by putting them into the yoke, Luk. 14. 19. with 2 Cor. 6. 14.

greatest grace where it is, and commited for the best nature where it is not.

This difficulty, and the excellency of walking with approbation in the works and offices belonging to all and every one, in their particular place and calling, I am the more willing to move, because I have heard divers godly persons complain, that having had in the single estate much liberty

ty for sweet and Soul-refreshing conversings with God; being afterwards married, and having a Family to look to, they have been so forced from them, as to find a great loss in their acquaintance with God, in regard of that frequent enlarged and uninterrupted communion with him which they formerly enjoyed. But let not such who would fain be

b Gen. 18. 33.

c Luk. 10. 39.

conversing with God b if they could, and at Jesus feet c if they might, droop or be disconsolate, much lesse dismayed, sure now (being entred into society) they come to make use of that habit, and those helps of holyness, which they got and laid up in the single estate; and this may be a Rule, that the Use of all preparatory exercises and assistances is ter

ter than the Using of them: They therefore than shew forth the power of their former religious performances, do not lose, but make a gainfull exchange, They do but come from the exercises of Religion, to the exercise, which is the end, ornament, perfection, and complement of all Exercises.

Its true as the Apostle saith, He that is Unmaried

married careth for the things belonging to the Lord, howsoe may please the Lord, *that is, having not other things to care for, he is more free for it; He doth not say that every one that is married taketh that care; or that if a man be once married, he taketh it not; but only that the Un-married have an advantage, and may do it more and more easily.*

ly.

ly Again, He that is married careth for the things that are of the World, how he may please his wife, [a] *but then this is to be noted that he performs a good office in it, his Care is not his Sin but his Duty; and every Duty hath its comfort and reward; Yea that care and sorrow which women are called to in the Married estate, hath this comfort assured to it, that (their*

[a] 1 Cor. 7. 32, 33, 34.

(their continuance in Faith, Charity, Holynesse and Sobriety being supposed) they shall be saved in Childe-bearing, [b] that is, the conscientious and patient performance of the offices, and undergoing the affections of Child-bearing Women, is their proper way to Heaven; for that's the work which God hath committed to them to do; [c] and the thing

b 1 Tim. 2. 15.

c Mark 13. 34.

thing wherein the reality of their Religion is to discover it self.

Yet here there is need to annex a Caution, to wit, that though the external duties of religion be lessened by marriage (Human to some, for divers that had lesse liberty before marriage have none by it,) I say, though religious duties be lessened by mariage, yet they must not be left;

Christians

Christians, whether married or unmarried must still acquaint their hearts which will seldom, [d] *and be prudent to preserve their Fellowship with God; They that can be content with an Husband, with a Wife and Children (and all Worldly accommodations) without God, never knew what it was to enjoy God. Nay rather, They that have*

[d] Eccles. 10. 1.

Wives

Wives must be as if they had none, in regard of their readinesse for the service of God. An husband must not say, I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come. Nor the Wife, I have a Husband, therefore God cannot have me; but though they be not able to take (as some unmarried may) every opportunity, yet they must not

e 1 Cor. 7. 29.

f Luke 14. 20.

nor neglect those they may take, nor make themselves liable to that most sad Charge of making light of Gods Ordinances and gracious invitations.

Mat. 22. 5.

But the Gate grows wide from so little an House (although it may be reckoned a part of the House) I shall hasten homeward. If any desire why I publish this at this time, it might be enough

enough for me so aged) to answer, Because every man should do what good he can while he hath time, yet something more may be said in regard of the present time, wherein the great God (whose Works are like Himself) by rare providences, so rare and admirable providences, both because so high and so dry, hath in such sort altered and bettered the state of

things

things amongst us, that our righteous, gracious and accomplished King is returned unto us; publick, if our high sins, our treacherous and provoking profaneness, and deep security do not hinder, promises unto us an happy Settlement. Now, all times of trouble and persecution detains and deter from marriage; so times of peace (albeit marriage should have some further

and

and greater reason than National rest) I say, times of peace and establishment, give encouragement to it, and consequently make those and the like Scripture-Sions fashionable for the reading of it more lately, and thereby more happily.

And so (yet all though this advice reflect on the married estate, yet it is not so appropriated to it, but

but those there is use of it, as there is of that godly-ness and regular walking, that is perfuadable unto, in every estate: It is Christian as well as Conjugal counsell, and though it be composed for, and contrived into the married condition, yet (that estate being so comprehensive) much of it may serve indifferently for Christians in every Condition.

Desiring

Desiring thy prayers (Christian Reader) that the Author of the Counsell (or rather the weak Instrument) may be Himself the Observer; I rest,

Thy Servant

for Jesus sake,

William Thomas.

Chri

Epistle, P. 4. concentred r. *concerned*.

P. 27. Christan, r. *Christian*.
P. 41. Col. 1. 17. r. *Col.* 4. 17.
P. 69. l. 8. damage, r *danger*.
P. 63. l. 7. comfort, r. *consort*.
P. 84. l. 8. rustles, r. *justles*.
P. 88. l. 2. it combines, r. *is comliness*.

The Matter of the ensuing
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The Matter of the enclosing

MEDITATION

Sum'd up, and referr'd to the seve

Numbers and Petitions of them:

WHEREIN—

CHRISTIAN COUNSELL,

applyed to the

Maried Estate.

1. MArriage is an estate *honourable in all*; [a] And they fall below the nature and worth of *men*, (and much more of *Christians*) who quarrell that

a Hebr. 13. 4.

estate which God hath ordained for the comfort, benefit, and increase of *mankind*.

2. The honour of the married estate is preserved, while the bed is kept without being defiled either by *falseness or filthiness*.

3. But the *duty* of the estate is as difficult as the *dignity* is great, and a businesse it is of far greater vertue for any to acquit himself in the *married*, then in the *single* estate.

4. A single and solitary estate is the touchstone of sincerity; and they

they are *surely* good that are good *secretly*; but of our *wisdom*, *patience*, and *zeal*, society is the truest triall.

Requisites in marriage.

5. Of *zeal* in regard of religious exercises and private conversings with God; for which, to gain a *competent time*, and therein, to come before God with a *clear heart* in the multitude and number of worldly businesses, will undoubtedly make Christians to bestir themselves.

1. Zeal.

6. And of *patience* also in regard of Family-occasions, and the many

1. Patience.

vexations of spirit that do arise both from things and persons.

It is true that divers occasions of disturbance and distempers, may by providence, and prudence be prevented; and our little stock of patience bespeaks the best assistance of that providence; but to avoid & discharge our selves of all, is no more in our power, then to countermand the course of providence, b. or to alter the nature and dispositions of people.

b Eccles. 1. 15.

We have need of patience therefore, that what

what we are not able to *prevent* we may be willing to *endure*.

9. Nor doth patience *endure* it only, but *abate* and end it; and this is the common fruit of our impatience, the *doubling of our disturbance*.

Impatience an enemy to Society

10. And consider here (to make patience more precious) what perturbations of spirit are great molesters of piety, and interrupt our society *with God*; for *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*; that is, a wrathfull person, (especially in a wrath-

1. With God.

c Jam. 1. 20.

full passion) is very unfit to do the will of God, either in works of Religion, that require a quiet and peaceable heart, d or in works of Righteousnesse, that require an equal and dispassionated judgement, a Colos. 16. 10.

d 1 Tim. 2. 8.

2. With Man.

11. Wrathfull distempers also disweeten our society *with men*: Needs must others less comfortably come near *us*, and we less honourably converse with them, if we shall (though but in some degrees) resemble that *Nabal* who was *so froward*

ward (as his Servants said, and none is able to shake off what Servants say truly, *Job* 21. 13. *that a man could not tell how to speak to him*, 1 Sam. 25. 17.

12. Adde to this, that the comfortable society *with our selves*, and our own Consciences is hindred while we give way to those passionate words and carriages wherewith the Conscience upon serious and sober consideration cannot choose but be much grieved, 1 Sam. 25. 31.

13. Now why should we

3. With our own Consciences.

ever have any fellowship with that which darkens and disturbs all fellowship both with God, and Men, and with our own Consciences.

Comfort in crossenes of nature.

14. Not that all comfort is lost by the crossenesse and cursednesse of our nature. Divers belonging unto us are very unpleasant and troublesome unto us. God hath some knotty timber in his Country. All that love him are not like his Servants, who are yet in my sad [illegible] Earth, (haply) in Hell too, in regard of natural pow- [illegible] sweetnesse)

a Numb 12. 3.

meeknesse) but some as b Jonah. And yet to speak the truth (not to protect Perversenesse, but to support those that groan under the Burthen of it) the harshest Good-Christian is better than the sweetest either Heathen or Hypocrite; and the worst Christ that hath is better than the best the Devil hath.

b Jonah 4. 9.

15. But though sincerity of Heart, and sowrenesse of Carriage may stand together, yet they stand as two Enemies in the Field, and many sad Fights there

be in that divided-heart that is the fear of that Way, the reason whereof is because the one Enemy, I mean a *crooked nature*, is so *unvariable*, and the other, that is, the c *divine nature*, the grace of God, the Rose among the Thorns, is so *unconquerable*, and so *inexhaustible*.

c 2 Pet. 1. 4

16. This combate, hard as it is, is often the best hold that a Christian hath, and is so necessary a fruit of Sincerity, that they never feared God truly that endured their inordinate passions

patiently.

patiently. Impatience, with others is their fault, to be impatient *with themselves* for it, is their *confusion.*

But to be troubled with our Frowardness is the more uncomfortable part of our Comfort; *To God all things are possible* and, howsoever we may not procure a contempt of our Naughtiness here, than our Nature, yet by prayer and earnest words power original Sin, course of this disease may receive some competent cure. To this cure, it could doth much *first*, seriously

The cure of Impatience.

1. Consideration of Gods providence.

seriously to consider Gods providence, secondly, to call to mind our own faults. And *Thirdly*, to commune with our own hearts.

Thus doing we should find our miserie in our affaires, may be the fruit of our own improvidence, and then our angry thoughts should fall home, but (however) *Secondly*, *divers* [illegible] things above are [illegible] wishing other towards [illegible] which provoked, wherein (whereof) [illegible] Impatience provoked to this, [illegible] *foolishly*, [illegible] d Job 1. 22.

crooked

crooked, yours, he made straight: the more need had we to set ourselves straight, for if they be crooked and we too, though God can make their Crookednesse end in his glory, yet ours will end in our own shame. Besides that they that can bear nothing forget why they were borne for, Man is borne to trouble as the sparks fly upward. Job 5. 7.

1. Withall, our own sinnes (both past and present) seriously mind us of forbearance in the faults

e Eccles. 1. 15.

2. Of our own faults.

faults and wrongs of others: we do not only need Patience (for) others, but (in) others, if they *need* others; consider also, that we *need* theirs, *Eccles. 7. 22.*

3. As the considering of our own faults *persuades* Patience, so *communing* with our own hearts, *works* it; I mean communing, not in *anger*, for then *Passion* is the *Judge*, and nothing is pleasing but what pleases; but *on our Beds*, and in cool blood, for then *Reason* is the *Judge*, then God is the Judge, and it must is

3. A Communing with our own hearts.

10

is for Patience that he passes Sentence; He is not in these windes and earthquakes, and fires, but in a *soft and still voice*, 1 King. 19. 11, 12. They that commune with their own hearts *most*, are like to chide *least*, for the upshot of that is, *Be still*, Psal. 4. 4.

3. To these may be added as an happy help, a patient and prudent Friend; what would *David* have done if *Abigail* had not been? If a *Woman* may prevail so much with a *Superiour*, why not a *Man* with an equal; with

4. A friend to us, and an enemy to our frowardness.

with an *inferiour*: if not, *while* the fit lasts, yet that it *may not* last; Passion is but the turning of Reason out of office. Now as the *Platonist* calls part with the Beast in Man, and the *sensitive part*, so doth a *true Friend* with the *understanding part*, and a Christian Friend with the *regenerate part*. Hence, (by his help) Reason and Grace is restored, and Passion expelled.

True it is, that Patience is a hard task in a choleric temper, the more need had such of greater care

? Plutarch de Adulat. & Amici discrim.

care, and wiser company, and (to say all) to make the more earnest prayers, and as faithfull as earnest, for what Heart is so rebellious and impenitent, but we can put bounds unto it, who saies unto the Sea it selfe, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?* Job 38. 11.

Prayers.

24. But in Society wakes our *Zeale* and our *Patience*, for it puts us much to the proof of our *wisdom* and what boldness in matters of *Religion* and *Belief*.

3. Wisdom.

25. And

In matters of Religion.

25. And as concerning matters of Religion, both in the cariage of religious *exercises*, and of religious *conferences*,

26. Religious exercises are as necessary as it is to depend upon God for the prosperous cariage of our affairs; for God will be depended upon in *his own way*. It is the base and sacrificed opinion that people have of having to do with God (as if it were but so much labour lost) that makes them grudge the time for holy Duties, and make as if a day of humiliation

humiliation would undo them. Look upon *prayer* as a familiar communing with the most glorious God, [a] as the Supplyer of all wants, [b] as a Shelter from all dangers, [c] as the Setler, Sanctifier, and Prosperer of all Businesses, [d] and is it possible to neglect it? Worthy thoughts of better things will shift for time, and devise wayes whereby to enjoy them, onely *Infidelity abandons Duty.*

27. Let it be the shame therefore of those that professe themselves Believers, to think that *Piety* is

a Gen. 18. 33.
b Luke 18. 9, 10.
c Ezra 8. 21, 22.
d Gen. 24. 12, 15, 7.

is against *Profit*, and that there is no gain in Godlynesse; yet times for our general and particular Calling should be discreetly divided; religious exercises should be fitly ordered, and (with Prayer) (in particular) those are made with others should be framed according to the State and Condition of our Family or Company; Not so hard and high as that the Simple cannot understand the ra; not so simple and inofficious as that they that have understanding cannot relish them;

1. In religious exercises.

e 1 Cor. 14. 16.

them, f not so long as that the weak cannot bear them, g nor so short and overly as to nourish Security, and to accommodate Unghostly men in their averſnes from holy Duties by the ſleighneſſe and curſorineſſe of them.

f Jer. 48. 10.

g Mat. 9. 16, 17.

28. As for Christian and Spiritual conference, and that continual, (as opportunitie ſhall offer it ſelf) it is both the duty of men faithfull, who are called upon to *exhort one another daily*, h and the character and mark of men fearing God,

2. In Christian conference.

h Heb. 3. 12, 13.

God, who *spake often one to another*, Mal. 3. 16.

29. Yet difference is to be made between Persons and Persons; Some be Superiours in *age*, *abilities*, *office*, before whom it becomes *Inferiours* rather to *offer* things to consideration, than to *affirm*; Some are *weaker*, and of better *hearts*, others *wiser* and of better *parts*; good and ghostly things will be accepted of *those*, but wiser things as well as better must be brought to *these*; for though they approve all *holy things*, yet they relish

lishy *higher*. Again. Some are willing and able to speak of better things; (and haply not able to speak well of other things) to these come purposely to talk of God and Heaven, and do it plentifully; but give not Weaklings more of Spiritual conference than they are able to accept; rather mix (as Sawces) civil, moral, pleasant, (but some way profitable) speeches; yea, if men be so unghostly and Ungodly, that *religious* conference will not be admitted, joyn with them

them in *evil*, to prevent *prejudice*.

19. And distinguish also between Times and Times, between a *private* *visit*, (wherein Christians shall do well to sit together on Earth as Saints in Heaven, and to poure forth themselves one to another in the fulnesse of Spiritual discourse) and a *common* *feast*, wherein though they ought principally do intend Gods glory, [a] yet they are permitted also to chear up themselves with such things and words as are suitable for the

a 1 Cor. 10. 31.

e refreshing of the out-
ard man in an human
y: [b] Not but that
en in such meetings
ere should be a *mixture*
better things, (and
me be so happy as to
merry and wise too,
d to convey pious
ings with *pleasure* and
th *power* also) I say,
t but that in such mee-
gs there should be a
xture of better things
hats no Christian mee-
g that shuts out Christ)
t in other meetings,
when people be more
both to speak and to
ear things spiritual)

[b] Gen. 43 34. Judg. 14. 12.

a *greater measure.*

31. Such cautions being observed, they that fear God do like themselves in *speaking often one to another.* c But *often* is not all; Christians must be *good* and *wise*; *Goodnesse* speaks *much*, and *Wisedom* speaks *well*; and *very well* it should be, because when they that fear God speak *often*, God *still* stands by with his *book of remembrance*; d and how wise should the *Speaker* be when God himself is the *Noter.*

c Mal. 3. 16.

d Mal. 3. 16.

32. That Christians may admonish one another,

ther, the word of God must *dwell* in them; [e] Its the great fault (I do not say of Christan but of) Christians- conference, that they speak out of their own heads, without their *books* or their *guide*, their *Bible* or their *Pastor*, and of those things most whereof the Scripture speaks least; indeed of things curious and disputable, rather than necessary and profitable: A thing the more to be both marked and feared, because the spending and ingaging of mens time and talk, and wits, and

e Col. 3. 16.

zeal in niceties and more refined Speculations tends — 1. to a sleighting and a kind of loathing of the plaine and maine things of Scripture, as too low for so great Proficients to look upon: and 2. to a separating from the Churches of God, as too corrupt for men so ghostly to abide in.

33. To prevent this the better, as the word of God must dwell in us, so it must dwell in us *richly*, that we may not need to rove other where to make our selves rich in Religion. Now be-

cause

cause men may talke much *of Scripture*, and yet talke but *little Scripture*; (for Scripture is not it self unless taken and spoken in its right sense) therefore the word of God must not only dwell in us *richly*, but *rightly*, and *in all wisedom*, [f] that is, with a right and judicious interpretation and apprehension, that so we may the better, when we meet together, *teach and admonish one another*.

[f] Colos. 3. 16.

34. Withall, Christian Conference must not only abound, and be sound, but it must (as the

To edifying is required,

Scripture every where speaks) *edifie*, that is, it must be seasonable, suitable, and so ordered and carried as shall be most for the building up of the Company before whom it is delivered.

1 Clearing the soil.

35. He that builds must first *clear the soile*, that is, get some rights and interests, some good affections and estimations among them to whom he speaks; or (at least) be able to produce a good calling, that he may not be diverted with this sad and sowre demand, *Upon what acquaintance*

quaintance or title do you make so bold as to build here.

36. Next, he must *lay a good foundation*; and not reare a high and weighty frame (such as Zeale is willing to make) upon such sand and soluble matter as will not abide a Storm. Good things had need to be so much the better *laid*, by how much they are worse *lov'd*, and he that would speak *hopefully* in things not pleasing to nature, is put to it to speak *convincingly*, for men will never receive things against their *will* and

2. A good foundation.

and their *reason* too.

3. A right frame.

37. A sound foundation being laid, he must build, not *hay* and *stubble* upon it, but what will abide tryal; for as a man would be loath that all his building should fall *with* the foundation, so he may be very sory too that all the building should fail *but* the foundation; to wit, for want of a right and workmanlike raising his frame upon it. Wisedom is needfull for every Builder, though most for a Minister, who, though he be not a *Paul*, yet may be

called, in respect of People, a Master-builder, 1 *Cor.* 3. 10.

38. The manner of Building is a material thing also; knotty timber requires the Axe much, and *some must be saved with Fear*, [a] whether they like it or no, for its sure (if they be saved) they *will* like it; others (happily) are so meekned and made ready by the grace and hand of God, that there's no cause why hammer or axe, or any iron or harder toole should be heard, [b] and if it be so, he hath a hard

[a] A meet manner of building.

[a] Jude, v. 23.

[b] 1 Kings 6, 7.

heart that will strike but one needless stroke, *on such have compassion*, Jude v. 22, 23.

39. As for the fashion of the Building, *wisedom* is a *winner*,[c] and the commendation of a Spiritual builder is, to raise upon a *good foundation*, a *substantial frame*, in an *amiable form*; amiable, and yet variable. All men love not to have their Houses built alike: Some love *higher* Houses, and delight that others should set up in their hearts, a most spiritual and heavenly structure:

c Prov. 11. 30.

ture: others love a *lower* piece, and cannot be abstracted from the world, and from affairs, yet *in truth* they are: and *upon Meditation*, but not in such a height, and with such devotion, either because of the necessity of their Calling, or the propension of their minds to secular imployments and engagements: in which respect something must be yielded, and they that would *edifie*, must (as our Saviour speaks) *tell them of earthly things* [d] that is, speak of heavenly things in a more human and

d John 3. 12.

and rational, rather than in a more ghostly and spiritual way; and (withall) so limit their Christian discourse, as to let them see that as they be willing to advantage them in regard of their Souls: So they be loath to prejudice them in regard of their Affairs. To go on, Some there be that like a *Wide* house, and to be left wholly to that large room which the Scripture puts them into in its general rules; others love *lesser rooms*, and to have the generalities of Scripture drawn down

down for a regular and strict course in all particulars; for where grace is lesse advantaged by *natural abilities*, it had need be more assisted and incouraged by *outward observances*. Thus there being a latitude in Religion, and God being pleased to dwell in Houses of different Forms; [a] Building-Christians may not contend to have *all* as *one*, neither stand with men that are truly willing, that *with them* Christ should have *a house to put his head in*, about the *fashion* of the building;

a Ephes 2. 22.

building; onely the *foundation*, the *materials*, and the *maine parts* of the building must be alike in all.

40. Generally, As the Constitution of the Patient regulates the Physicians Prescript; So we should observe in all religious Communications *what* will take, and *how much*: Give Christians leave *to leave with an appetite*, even when the Conference is pleasing; and if (haply) it be less gratefull, and carry a reproof with it, then, as the maine project of the

Physician

Physician is to *preserve nature*, and to maintain himself a party, in the body of the Patient; so ever look to this, to preserve *love*: Be so *wise* at one time as to be *welcome* at another, yea so *sweet* at one time as to be *sewr for* at another.

Duties of Relation

41. As Christian wisdome is seen in the exercises of Religion, so also in our ordinary *relations*, amongst which that of Pastors may well challenge the first place; concerning whom, the Rule is, esteem them very highly in love for their works

1. For Ministers

a 1Thess. 5. 13.

works sake. (a) Nor is due and just estimation to be *entertained* onely, but (as there is occasion) to be *declared*; for as outward expressions without inward and real respects are reputed a Flattery; so an inward estimation, not seconded by outward and answerable acknowledgements, is in danger to be reckoned a Dissimulation. The heart is the *treasury* of good affections, not the *prison*.

42. Yet Ministers require no such respect as to debarre their People from

from being their *private* and *modest* Remembrancers, whether of defects or faults; [b] for as People have from Pastors a *ministerial*, so Pastors have from People a *christian* assistance; but its sufficient when they have to do with Ministers and men apprehensive, to intimate the former; and while they have to do with men consciencious and tender, to touch the latter. Not that things not justifiable should be favoured in any: but Men look to have so much right done them as not to

b Col. 1. 17.

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[b] Col. 1. 17.

to be worse thought of than they are. Now a frequent and importunate Monitor, reports himself to have either a dull or an hard-hearted hearer.

43. Christian Remembrances from People to their Pastor, as they ever require *due observance*, so do they relish best, when they are tendred to them (and so it is when they are tendred to any other) as acts of *obedience and conscience*; proceeding from them not as men *affecting* such an *office*, but as not *daring to omit* such

ſuch a *duty*: its one thing to ſpeak of things amiſs (eſpecially to Superiors) as thoſe that are *bound* to do it, another thing to ſpeak as thoſe that are *bent* to do it.

44. Its good alſo to be ſure things are amiſſe before a man ſignifie it, elſe he muſt needs diſcover a want either of a good judgement, or of good will, which, though the wiſedome and humility of Miniſters and good Chriſtians will and ſhould *cover*, yet People ſhould provide not to *diſcover*. Two things

things are due to all good People, in particular; to a Pastor, Love and Honour: *Love* covers a multitude of things that are truly blameable: but *Honour* will not so much as mention that that is questionable.

45. Such things as these are requisite, in point of prudence between People and their Pastor: but the best wisedome of a Hearer is; to make the best use of his Minister, for which purpose Disciples shall do well to *propound*, and Ministers to *accept and countenance*,

countenance, usefull Questions: but propounded they should be at fit times without molestation, and urged with modesty, as by those whose meaning is not to *maintain* an Argument (theres difference between a Disciple and a Disputant) but to *obtain* an Answer.

46. Upon such Proposals, Ministers do for present (as need requires, and as occasions permit) debate the matter, and perhaps deliver their judgements, which people are reverently to receive,

ceive, and to entertain, as those that are willing to *take* resolution as well as to *seek it*; not but that they may examine any mans judgements (as the *Bereans* did *Pauls* Sermon) by Scripture, or by Reason, but not oppose it by mere opinion. I grant indeed there may be some belonging to a Ministers charge of extraordinary parts, knowledge, and judgement, to whom therefore more is to be granted; but (to speak of that which is ordinary) it is not equal nor modest (when Teachers

chers and Scholars conferre together,) for the Scholar and Disciple to oppose judgement with judgement, nor to be high and peremptory, (though with some shew of reason) for if the Teacher *have not* better reason for the present, yet he *may have.*

47. But whatever Pastors and Teachers say for the present, yet as preaching is a Ministers principal *task*, so is it a Hearers highest *help*; what Hearers propound, Ministers do (perhaps) more observe than answer

swer when they propound it, and choose rather to speak *better* in publick, than *more* in private, and publick *Sermon-solutions* are absolutely best, (unlesse in some private and personal Cases) as being

1. —1. *more general*, what satisfaction I *alone* should have in private, *many* by my means and proposals

2. have in publick—2. *more full*, and (by reason of study and meditation) more full of sufficiency than those can be that are delivered suddenly

3. —3. and *more effectual*

by

by informing the mind, and satisfying the conscience, as being held forth in Gods principal Ordinance, to which he hath promised his special presence and blessing, [a] and with the prayers of the Minister and the whole Congregation that that blessing may be bestowed.

[a] Mat. 28. 20.

48. Yet the occasions, gifts, and dispositions of men being different, and some being more addicted to Discourse than Meditation, (and more happy in it also) nothing can be

here certainly defined, nor is it needfull; for the wise and carefull Christian will quickly see *what* he may have, and *how* he may *best* have it; and accordingly manage the matter so as to obtain his own best assistance, with his Pastors best acceptance.

1. For Neighbours & Friends.

49. Next to the Minister, our *Wisedom* will be well imployed in carrying our selves commendably to our Neighbours and Friends, whether *called* by the grace of God, and sanctified, or (as yet) *uncalled*.

50. With

50. With those that are *truly good*, we shall do well to converse — 1. with *more familiarity* and openesse of heart, as being of one *houshold*, [b] however Un-united by external allyances; — 2. with *intirenesse of affection* as being *children* of *one Father*, [c] whatever outward distances there be; * — — 3. with *respect to edification*, as being Servants of the same Master, for whose use we ought to improve one another; In this regard, the sum of our Duty is, to assist in *Persons* regenerate, the

1.

b Gal. 6. 10.

2.

c 2 Cor. 6. last.
* Ps. 119. 69.

3.

parts regenerate, and that according to that *good and perfect, and acceptable will of God*, whereby the *renewed mind* ought to be guided.[d] A thing the rather to be marked, that our Zeale in the pressing of Persons well affected, may be imployed with respect to *Duty*, not *Phansie*; so as to nourish *grace* in them, not *humour*; and so as to beat down *sinne* in them, not *civility* and humanity: In brief, that that is contrary to *Gods word*, not *our way*.

d Rom. 12. 2.

51. As for those that are *Un-called*, the rule is,

to carry our selves towards them *wisely*, [e]. It sufficeth (in a sort) to carry our selves towards the good *innocently*, but as for those that be *without*, as all Un-converted persons are in a true and a sad sence, [f] Innocency needs Wisedoms assistance for the avoiding of any thing blameable, though but in appearance. [g] It belongs to our Sanctity and Sincerity, not to *be* Faulty, but to our Wisedom, not to *seem* so.

52. Particularly, we shall do well before un-

e Coloss. 4. 5.

f Mark 4. 11.

g 1 Thes. 5. 22.

regenerate Neighbours and Friends, to carry our-
1. selves, — 1. *Innocently*, then shall not they *harm*
h 1 Pet. 3 13. us, h then may we the better hope to winne
i 1 Pet. 2. 12. them. i — 2. *Meekly*, for if they *be* bad, so *were*
2. we, and if we *be* good, so *may* they. k — 3. *Kindly*,
k Tit. 3. 2, 3. if Barbarians shew *no small kindness* to Christi-
3. ans, l shall Christians
l Act. 28. 2. shew no great kindnesse to Barbarians, and Per-sons unacquainted with religion? if those that we wish were good were found to be very neighbourly, shall we harden

them

them in their Condition by being behind with them in Kindnesse? — 4. *Courteously*, being affable, amiable, willing to keep correspondence and to comply with others, not *against Conscience*, but against *natural Disposition*, and the bent of our Spirits; which must be so far ordered and mastered, as that we withdraw not from Neighbours and Friends, as those that be loath to look upon them; that's against humanity: nor be sowre towards them; that's against civility: nor

4.

refrain causlesly commó meetings with them, that's against the laws of love and humane society.

5. —— 5. *Christianly*, in regard of all the former, carrying them all with an aime at their Conversion; and *trying* them whether they may be made good by any good words or wayes of love; but not *tyring* them in the tryal. By such courses as these we shall either allure them to our Profession, and (if God will) gain them, or else honour our Profession before them.

53. But

53. But Friends and Acquaintance are further off; In the Family, where our residence is most required, our prudence is tyed to a continual task.

3. For those in the Family.

54. Therein (haply) some are *Equals*; and toward these we must carry our selves humbly, not haughtily;[c] and chearfully, not dully and lumpishly; one Friend is not to be a *Stone* to another, out of which nothing can be gotten; but a *whetstone*,[d] to sharpen and quicken to such conference and converse as is

1. Equals

c Rom. 12. 10.

d Prov. 27. 17.

both pious and profitable, both for the advantage of their Souls and their affairs.

55. Others in the Family are *Inferiours*, towards whom we must be carefull to exercise Religion, Justice, Patience:

Inferiours.

1. 1. *Religion* in the countenancing of that that is good, and discountenancing of every thing that is evil. It is not to be spoken how much good Superiours do by casting their favours upon them that fear God; and their frowns upon the Sinnes and corruptions of their Charges. e

e Ps. 101. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Charges. —— 2. *Justice*, The care of those that are not equal (but advanc'd above others) is to do *that that is equal*;[f] trembling to abuse their power and preheminence to oppression.[g] —— 3. *Patience* and condescending, and that so far as to let my Servant know, that as I am his Master, so *Reason* is mine, and much more *Religion*.[h]

56. The nearest Family-relation, and the dearest, is that of man and wife, wherein *Love* is the wifes due, and *Subjection* the husbands; *Honour* is a thing

2.

f Col. 4. 1.

g Job 31. 21, 23.

3.

h Job 31. 13.

3. Man and wife.

thing belonging to them both, i to the husband as the *Worthier*, to the wife as the *Weaker*; as a costly piece of Plate is laid up choycely, and a curious Glasse handled tenderly; the one because of the value, the other because of the beauty and bricklenesse.

i 1 Pet. 3. 7.

57. Its an easie matter for the Wife that is the lesse and the tenderer, to love the Husband; but of greater vertue for the Husband (that is the higher) to love the Wife, and of especial efficacy also, turning all the wheels

Ephe. 5. 15. Col. 3. 14.

wheels in the Wifes frame for the Husbands use; for Love in it self is an amiable and attracting Vertue, but withall it includes an estimation; hence the love of eminent men is a Rarity; for they look upon what is in others as great Merchants upon petty Markets, wherein there is nothing but things too poor for them to prize. Now Estimation is the greatest encouragement to Action and Accommodation; the Wife therefore discerning her self to be a Person priz'd and her

Husbands

Husbands delight. Delights to do that onely (and all that) that may accomplish the Husbands desire.

58. A Husbands *love* will never take away the Wifes *fear*: [a] Vertue begets Reverence (especially in those who do not onely behold the beauty, but enjoy the benefit of it) and love is the Husbands proper Vertue: Familiarity may breed Contempt in a political and civil distance, but not in a conjugal; which is not like the *head politique* and the body, in which

a Eph. 5. 33.

which either part uſes too much to ſhift for it ſelf, *that* to maintain an *honour*, and *this* to obtain a *benefit*: but like the *head natural*, and the members that are ſo indeared, that the head is never in dammage of contempt for dealing kindly with the inferiour members. Beſides, that God ſo bleſſes what he requires in the Husband, that is, *intire love*, that it ſhall never hinder him of what the ſame God requires in the Wife, that is, hearty and *ſeemly reſpect*.

59. As Love muſt be the

the Husbands study, so is Subjection the Wives duty, I say, *Subjection*; a sad word, but a thing not only easie, but sweet, if the Husband mind his duty first; The Husband *loves*, the Wife *serves*; and who are not Servants most willingly when they are lov'd most dearly? Love was never yet known to be a Tyrant. Besides, *in* him that guides and carries things by his Command the ability is required, and *by* him the adventure is born; the Wife hath the ease to walk onely in the way

way chaulked out, neither cumbred with the managing of the business, if it be difficult, nor blamed for the successe, if it be disasterous; Adde to this, that it is the custome of Love in the Husband to put the Wifes counsel into his own Command, and so to obey *him*, is to please *her self*, and to fulfill her own mind.

60. If it so fall out, that the Husband be more imperious than wife, and have more mind to *rule* than to *love*, it sends the sad Wife to see

see why she chose him, but doth not privilege her to disobey him; here her Wisedome must facilitate her Subjection, which in stead of *denying obedience, prevents Commands*, for which purpose, if she foresee any thing *unlawfull*, her *piety* pleads for the prevention, (and that so, as to take no Nay) if *unreasonable*, her wit, if *unpleasing*, her *interests*; and by these means (but ever with prayer to God, for though it do not belong to Wives to rule their Husbands, yet to God it doth)

doth) I say, by these means, the matter is like to be well amended: If any thing be yet heavier, that will not make Disobedience *lawfull*, but it will make Obedience *laudable*, and much more *thank-worthy*: [b] and its like to be as profitable to the Wife, as commendable in her, the doing of what God requires of her, being the onely way to change and mollifie her hard Husband, not onely because meekness and submissiveness hath a melting quality in any heart that can relent, [c]

b 1 Pet. 2. 19.

c Judg. 8. 1,2,3

lent, but because where Gods *will* is performed, Gods *power* (that is able to alter and order all things and persons [d]) is more hopefully expected, and the more like sooner or later) to be obtained.

d Phil. 3. 21. Prov. 21. 1.

60. Nothing more alienates Maried persons than the studying of each others imperfections and errours, which as they should keep as much as may be from others *eyes*, so from their own *thoughts*; the *observation* of them is too much for others, the *meditation* for themselves. 62. The

62. The best way to live comfortably (therefore) is, for the Wife or Husband to look upon their *own* faults, but upon the vertues or perfections of their *comforts*: the first of these begets Patience; the later maintains Love.

63. *Wilfullness* is a fault inexcusable every where; but if a Wifes *Weakness* raise up stirs and debates, that's the Husbands fault, for why is he a *Man* (indued of God with more knowledge) but that he should *dwell with his wife according to knowledge*, [a]

[a] 1 Pet. 3. 7.

ledge, that is, according to that knowledge that is in *him*, not that infirmity that is in *her*, using his wit for the covering of her *weaknesse*: or why is he a *Husband*, but to put a veil over, and to cast an honour upon the weaker part of himself? and equal it is that he should be a *covering* to her when she needs it, who, when she needs it not (and out of the case of weakness) is a *crown* to him.

b Gen. 20. 16.

64. To summe up all, Man and Wife should live together as *Fellow-*

heirs

heirs of the grace of life, [c] and those that stand God-ward, and Heaven-ward, in an equality; if *life* belongs to him, so doth it to her; if *grace* help her to that life, so doth it him; if he be an *heir* of this life, in that she is his *fellow*. This should make the Wife bear her Subjection with much more meekness, and the Husband also to carry his Superioritie with much modesty and mildness.

c 1 Pet. 3. 7.

65. Yea, both of them to use Mariage-contentments with much moderation.

deration, to wit, as those that are to live together but for a while here, but hereafter for ever; and that after another fashion; for *the fashion of this world passeth away*,[d] & no estate here affords any other than a *perishing* comfort; and a *poor* also, as being of too low a nature to be heard of when once we come to Heaven,[e] and why should we that are appointed to heavenly glory, engage our affections in those pleasures that are altogether unworthy that place, and not rather en-

d 1 Cor. 7.29,31.

e Lu 20 35, 36.

ter

ter (as much as may be) into acquaintance with those comforts which we shall never shake hands withall, but have a full fellowship with hereafter? Meat and Drink, and Mariage, are for our *need* (while we are here below) rather than for our *honour*; it becomes us not (therefore) to *lye down*, and wallow in them, but to *lap* (with our hands) and *leave*, [f] reserving our *hearts* for and setling them upon the glories of that place, wherein, *they neither marry, nor are gi-*

[f] Judg. 7. 5, 7.

ven in mariage, but are as the Angels of God.

66. If the Family, be blessed with Children, God must be blessed for them,[g] and thankfullnesse must be shewed in carrying the course of our dealing so with them, as to fit them for his use, from whom we have them. In this case the whole Family (if it may be) should come, (the unregenerate part gets strength, there be but a Servant to hold with it) but (however) Father and Mother should perfect

g Gen. 33. 5.

4. Children.

agre

agree together, that children may not take a boldnesse to themselves in things evil, by discerning (which they are quick to do) a protection for their Unjustifiable wayes in Parents discords. Joyne Opposition masters Corruption, but Family-faction is the bane of Education.

67. The rule of this Education is, *Teach a Childe*, h Its true, such cannot understand what is taught them in the things of God; nor did Christs Disciples under-

h Prov. 22. 6.

derstand divers things that he taught them while he was amongst them; [a] Its well that the seed is sown, and good things lodged in the heart; the fruit must be expected; and when the Spirit comes (that quickeneth all things) it will be produced from that very seed that in Childhood was received, [b] nor shall they depart from that very teaching when they be *old*, whereof they seemed to take no notice when they were *young*; Nay but that (divers times)

a Joh. 2. 22.

b Prov. 22. 6.

falls out otherwise: but the course (for all that) is Gods course, which he will make effectual according to his own counsel, and which (if it reach not further, yet prevails ordinarily for some good *restraint*, 2 King. 11. 2.

63. The best time and wayes of instruction, Parents themselves (that mind the duty) will well discern, onely the *thing* must be done, and neither *idlenesse* and *dullness*, nor *aversenes* from better things (when twice so much time is spent in

impertinencies) nor an *indisposition* to that particular duty, nor *worldlyness* and business (which is so presented by Satan, as if half an hours Catechising were an irrecoverable impediment) I say, neither these, nor any the like things should hinder the bringing up of Children *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

69. Unto instruction *correction* must be added, *that* puts in *wisedome*, *that* drives out *folly* c; of this Correction these must be, —— 1. a *clear cause*, to

c Prov. 22. 15.

I.

wit, the *childes foolishnes*, not the *correctors frowardnes*; —2. In it there must be a *calme heart*; it is not good to give a Medicine scalding hot; and —3. ejaculations and *prayers to God* do well with correction; for the rod is not onely an *instrument*, (fit in reason, to do a childe good) but an *ordinance* appointed of God for that purpose, unto which also God hath annexed a promise that it shall drive out and scatter, even Fast-bound-folly;[d] now every promise bespeaks a prayer.[e]

2.

3.

d Prov. 22. 15.
e 2 Sam. 7. 27.

70. It belongs to Parents to *lay up for children*, [f] but withall, to make them able (in a way wherein they shall glorifie God and profit others) to lay up for themselves: This is done by disposing them into a *fit* and usefull *calling*, with respect to the *abilities* God hath bestowed on them, and the *inclinations* he hath planted in them: for their *condition* must not appoint their calling, but their *Talents*. A man must not seek out such a Calling as will provide *best* for him, but wherein

f 2 Cor. 12. 14.

wherein he shall do *most* for God: Not but that a man may look to *live* by his Calling, and according to the charge of Children he hath, to *lay up* with it: but *first* seek the kingdóm of God, and the glory of God, that other things may (and then other things shall) be ministred and added. g

g Mat. 6. 33.

71. *Disposition in mariage* is (for Parents) the highest duty, and for Children (being well discharg'd) the happiest, wherein the principal thing to be regarded is,

the fear of God: for let the World esteem or disesteem Religion as they please, yet this is the Sentence of Scripture, *Favour is deceitfull, and Beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord*, (and its true of a man also) *she shall be praised.*[h] Its not to be denyed but a good nature (if any nature were good) is a great sweetner of Society, and would do pretty well if man and wife were to live together onely in a *humane way*, (wherein vertuous Heathens will compleatly keep

h Prov. 31. 30

keep them company) but being that they are to live together, *as Christian and Christian*, that they are to walk together with God as well as with Man, and with one another, yea and to converse together *as Fellow-heirs of the grace of life*; [i] whats a good nature (in reference to these things) but the *white of an egge*, which hath this in it, that it *offends not*; but this withall, that it *relisheth not*? Let it be the praise of good natures, that they *contradict not* goodness, but is not this a deep

[i] 1 Pet. 3. 7.

deep defect that they *contribute nothing to it?* Good they be for the *six dayes*, but *on the Lords day*, what is there pleasant in them but their Patience? Its true that a *fair nature* rustles with religion in a *froward*, and seems to get the better, yet to them that love to live in a course beyond nature, and to see *God* in a Companion (not *Cato*, *Socrates*, *Phocion*, &c.) Grace *with all its faults will be better than refined Nature*: A piece of Gold is better though it needs its *allowance*, than the com-

pleatest

pleatest piece of Silver, and *fretfull Jonas* will be found more lovely than the *meekest Mariner*, or the *sweetest Ninivite.*

72. The next thing to be looked at (after the religion of a Consort) is the *good discretion*; for *Wisedom exceeds Folly, as much as Light exceeds Darknesse.*[a] This is true in all, but in those especially of better parts. If a Daughter be to be disposed of (of more worth) nothing is more to be feared (next to an *Ungodly*) than an *Unworthy* Husband; for the duty of

a Eccles. 2. 13.

of a Wife is to be subject, and with what patience shall *wisedom* be subject to *Folly*? It may better be born if there be *eminency* of gifts on the Husbands part, and *infirmity* on the Wives; and yet, this is a business also, for a Husband ought to love his Wife, and there's such a distance between Wisedome and Weaknesse, that there will be work enough for a more than ordinary Wisedom to love (with a Husbands love) a Woman of more than ordinary Weakness.

73. After

73. After this, Mariage-affection requires a *pleasing person*, I say *after* this discretion, which is of the greater consequence (even in the matter of affection) than an external amiablenesse is; for this is the difference between Discretion and Beauty, that *Discretion* is a thing still continuing and still thriving; hence the love grounded upon *that*, both *stayes* and *growes*: but *Beauty* may be *gone* suddenly and (howsoever) is *going* continually; hereupon, the affection must needs fall with

with the foundation; yet it combines on both sides (in her especially that is to be the *desire of a mans eye*,[b]) of no small importance, which, suppose (erelong) it loose its lustre: yet divers things that will not abide *to the last*, may serve for the rooting and setling of affection *at the first*.

b Ezek. 24. 16, 18.

74. Nor is a *Patrimony and Portion* to be contemned where a Family and Posterity is to be raised; Fathers must not onely *lay out*, but *lay up* for their Children,[c]

c 2 Cor. 12. 14.

dren, and it is not easie, nor a thing so likely that they should lay up much who begin with nothing: Besides, we would be willing to live so, as to expresse Vertue, and draw a just reputation from others by the beames of beneficence dispers'd from our selves; now though Wisedome and Vertue be truly, yea and *eminently* good in *it self*; yet it is *evidently* good with an *inheritance*, [d] in which regard, howsoever a worldly portion is justly reckoned a very bad *Leader*, yet

d Eccles. 7. 11.

yet neglect not to look upon it as a usefull *Follower.*

75. All these things doe in special manner concern the Parties themselves that are *towards mariage*, onely Parents are to see that they doe not (out of self-will and imperiousnesse, or for vain and worldly ends, or out of self-respects) hinder their Children from walking in, but rather do all they can by their counsel and authoritie, to guide and carry them in a right and regular way

in

in a matter of so great importance. When God hath *given* Children unto them, as his Trustees, a chief part of their care lyes in this, to take heed how they *give them away*, and into what hands they put them for a continual, and perpetual abode.

76. *Mariage* being according to these (and the like) Rules religiously managed, as it is an estate honourable in it selfe, and in Gods account, so shall it be honourable also in the judgement

a 1 Pet. 3. 7.

judgement of all those that do impartially observe it, yea and in the Consciences of those Men that do ungroundedly oppose it.

FINIS.

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